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SUBJECT: POPE CALLS FOR RECONCILIATION IN SUDAN AND GREATER  
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN DARFUR

1. Pope Benedict XVI issued an appeal for national reconciliation in Sudan during an audience November 28 with Khartoum's Cardinal Archbishop, Gabriel Zubeir Wako. After greeting the cardinal's delegation, the Pontiff made the following statement:

Begin text

The cessation of the civil war and the enactment of a new Constitution have brought hope to the long suffering people of Sudan. While there have been setbacks along the path of reconciliation, not least the tragic death of John Garang, there now exists an unprecedented opportunity and indeed duty for the Church to contribute significantly to the process of forgiveness and national reconciliation. Though a minority, Catholics have much to offer through inter-religious dialogue as well as the provision of greatly needed social services. I encourage you therefore to take the necessary initiatives to realize Christ's healing presence in these ways.

The horror of events unfolding in Darfur, to which my beloved predecessor Pope John Paul II referred on many occasions, points to the need for a stronger international resolve to ensure security and basic human rights. Today, I add my voice to the cry of the suffering and assure you that the Holy See, together with the Apostolic Nuncio in Khartoum, will continue to do everything possible to end the cycle of violence and misery.

End text.  
SANDROLINI

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